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Elementary Experiments in Psychology. By CARL E. SEASHORE. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1908. Pp. xi+218.

This manual consists of sixteen experiments designed to accompany the introductory course in psychology. They have been selected and arranged with such care and ingenuity that no laboratory apparatus or supplies are required other than that which accompanies the book and such other materials as are easily secured by the student. Of the sixteen experiments about one-half are devoted to the senses and half to the higher mental processes; four are given to vision—visual after-images, contrast, the visual field, and visual space, and one each to auditory and tactual space, to cutaneous sensations, and Weber's law. Experiments in mental images, association, memory, apperception, attention, normal illusions, affective tone, and reaction time follow in the order named. The experiments are independent, but the order given is one which suits well the usual introductory course. The arrangement is also fortunate in that several experiments of distinct interest to the student but at the same time of considerable difficulty are found at the beginning, and notions of careful work and application may be secured at the start. The danger that the experiments be considered too elementary- or kindergarten-like—a danger which might possibly arise because of the simple means employed in many of them—is largely, if not wholly, avoided because of the care and thoroughness necessary for their successful performance and the very effective insistence of the text upon careful and honest work.

The statements and directions are notably clear, and concise, and the accompanying discussion and illustrations apt and illuminating. About half of the experiments may be performed individually; the rest need the co-operation of two students, one acting as subject and the other as experimenter. Two hours are required on the average for each experiment. Whether accompanied or not by the usual laboratory demonstrations, the experiments are devised with such excellent care and good sense that they will supplement very advantageously and prove a distinct addition to the first course in psychology. When laboratory facilities are available some of the experiments may be done advantageously with more exactness and with more elaborate apparatus, and others added or substituted.

There is every reason why the first-year student of psychology should secure some direct experimental knowledge of the subject as is the case in the introductory courses in other sciences. At present comparatively few students of psychology elect the experimental courses, and, as is very apparent, the usual laboratory demonstrations, however elaborate, do not take the place of even very simple experiments on the part of the student. A trial of the manual which the writer made in an introductory course in the summer session evidenced that the experiments were practicable, interesting to the university student, and that they may be carried out successfully by him independently and with but little direction or supervision. The book should prove of particular value to normal-school classes and to those of institutions not possessing laboratory equipment in securing for the student the first-hand knowledge of the subject which comes from direct experimenting.

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